

MEDIA RELEASE
17 JULY 2016

TB Coalition launch in KZN

A National Coalition against TB has been launched in Durban, KwaZulu Natal, today, 17



July 2016, just on the eve of the 21st International Aids Conference. This is a Partnership involving Government led by the National Department of Health; the National Religious Association for Social Development (NASRAD); the South African National TB Association (SANTA) as well as Red Cross, South Africa.

According to the National Minister of Health Dr Aaron Motsoaledi; TB has already overtaken AIDS as the biggest killer in all the infectious diseases. Minister Motsoaledi in warning the public about the dangers of this silent killer says:

“I dare all of you to request nurses to screen you for TB when you visit our clinics. Whether you are there for immunisation of your child or treatment of any other ailment, please ask to be screened so that you can know whether or not you need to be put on treatment for TB,” says Minister Motsoaledi.

The Minister then announced that the Government is going to scale up TB screening in all Metros hence this launch this in EThekweni which is said to have the highest concentration of TB patients in the whole country.

He also revealed that worldwide, approximately 9 million people are infected with TB with only 6 million of them on treatment. He says in South Africa; the people who are mostly affected are Miners; Inmates; people residing in Informal Settlements and children under 5 years of age. As a cause for the spread of TB; the Minister singled out poor socio-economic conditions; poor housing as well as food insufficiency.

Minister Motsoaledi called upon Churches, mosques, synagogues and other places of worship to get involved in the fight against the spread of TB, saying;

“Today, we again summon the nation, communities, religious groups, men, women and the youth to participate in this ground-breaking TB testing campaign. As we do so, we must remind one another that to have tuberculosis is not a shame. We must allay the fears of those who contract the disease that they will be shunned, excluded and made to suffer in silence away from everybody else. We must stand firm against prejudice, stigma and exclusion.’

South Africans are urged to be alert to symptoms of TB which include:

- Coughing for two weeks or more,
- Persistent fever for more than two weeks,
- Inexplicable weight loss, drenching sweats and fatigue.

The launch was led by the National Minister of Health Dr Aron Motsoaledi together with KZN Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo and a host of health professionals including members of parliament from African States who have signed a pledge to be part of the global TB Caucus.



Issued by the Office of the MEC of the KZN Department of Health